

FLORIDA

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The number of worker paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 46,000 for the week of July 9 through 15. Farmers hired 43,000 in July 2006 compared with 52,000 in April 2006 and 41,000 in July 2005. Agricultural services provided 3,000 paid workers, down 5,000 from last quarter and 1,000 more than those supplied a year ago.

Scattered rains brought welcomed moisture to some spots of the Panhandle with many areas still remaining dry during the survey reference week. Continued dry conditions caused widespread infestations of lesser cornstalk borer in non-irrigated peanut fields in some Panhandle localities. Cotton condition is reportedly fair but most plants have not made normal vegetative growth. There were no citrus shipments during the survey week; however, there was moderate vegetable shipment activity. Activity in the groves included applications of copper sprays for canker and disease control, nutritional sprays, cleaning ditches, fertilizing, mowing and irrigation.

The July combined farmer and agricultural services all hired worker wage rate average \$9.41 per hour, 30 cents less than the \$9.71 paid last year and 17 cents more than last quarter's \$9.24. Farmers paid an average of \$9.40 per hour, 21 cents higher than the \$9.19 paid in April 2006 and 30 cents below the \$9.70 paid in July 2005. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$9.50 per hour, 10 cents lower than the \$9.60 paid last quarter and 40 cents below the \$9.90 paid a year ago.

UNITED STATES**Hired Workers Down 11 Percent, Wage Rates Up 4 Percent From a Year Ago**

There were 1,202,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 9-15, 2006, down 11 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 875,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 327,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.74 per hour during the July 2006 reference week, up 36 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.95 per hour, up 34 cents from last July, while livestock workers earned \$9.56 per hour compared with \$9.26 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.10 per hour, was up 32 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 40.9 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 1 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in California and in the Pacific (Oregon and Washington), Northeast I (New England and New York), Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), and Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri) regions. In California, the cool, wet spring caused considerable delays in planting and slowed development of many field and vegetable crops. The ongoing worker shortages due to the heightened security at the Mexican border, combined with the late growing season, have kept the number of hired workers below last year. Wheat harvest in the Pacific region was behind normal due to cool early season temperatures, and worker shortages were reported due to the tight Mexican border security. In the Northeast I region, rain and wet conditions delayed field activities, and worker shortages were also reported in New York. These factors combined to reduce the number of hired workers from the previous year. Although some rain was received in the Southern Plains region, drought conditions prevailed over much of the area and severely curtailed crop growth and hay production, minimizing the need for field workers. Deteriorating pastures and decreased hay supplies caused more culling of livestock herds, reducing the demand for livestock workers. In the Corn Belt II region, wet conditions compared with the extreme dryness experienced during last year's reference week lessened the need for hired workers.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), and Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia) regions, and in Florida. Warm, dry weather in the Delta region allowed field activities to progress rapidly and increased the need for irrigation, causing more hired workers to be required. In the Appalachian II region, dry conditions in Tennessee more than offset the impact of wet weather in the remainder of the region, resulting in a collectively stronger demand for hired workers. Slightly drier conditions in the Appalachian I region compared with last year's reference week allowed field activities to make good progress and increased the need for hired workers. In Florida, the previous year's reference week was heavily impacted by moisture from earlier hurricanes. A return to more normal weather patterns this year led to an increased demand for field workers.



United States
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Of Agriculture



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TABLE 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, July 9 – 15, 2006, with comparisons

Employer, Year, and survey week	Hired Workers						
	Number of workers			Hours Worked Per Week	Wages Paid by Type of Work		
	All	Expected to work			All	Field	Livestock
		150 days or more	149 days or less				

HIRED BY FARMERS

		<i>Thousands</i>		<i>Hours</i>		<i>Dollars Per Hour ^{1/}</i>		
2006	July 9 - 15	43.0	38.0	5.0	41.0	9.40	8.39	9.10
	April 9 - 15	52.0	44.0	8.0	40.4	9.19	8.37	8.50
	January 8 – 14	49.0	38.0	11.0	39.2	9.55	8.80	8.80
2005	October 9 - 15	42.0	37.0	5.0	39.4	9.33	8.60	8.45
	July 10 - 16	41.0	39.0	2.0	41.3	9.70	8.75	9.15
	April 10 - 16	49.0	41.0	8.0	38.7	9.31	8.20	9.90
	January 9 - 15	48.0	37.0	11.0	38.7	9.52	8.50	8.60
2004	October 9 - 15	52.0	44.0	8.0	39.4	9.14	7.95	9.10
	July 11 - 17	39.0	33.0	6.0	39.2	9.63	8.70	9.10

**HIRED BY
AGRICULTURAL SERVICES**

2006	July 9 - 15	3.0		45.0	9.50	
	April 9 - 15	8.0		40.0	9.60	
	January 8 - 14	9.0		40.0	9.20	
2005	October 9 - 15	3.0		41.0	9.65	
	July 10 - 16	2.0		45.0	9.90	
	April 10 - 16	10.0		39.0	9.10	
	January 9 - 15	8.0		40.0	9.50	
2004	October 9 - 15	3.0		40.0	10.20	
	July 11 - 17	3.0		45.0	9.70	

**HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS &
AGRICULTURAL SERVICES**

2006	July 9 - 15	46.0		9.41	
	April 9 - 15	60.0		9.24	
	January 8 - 14	58.0		9.49	
2005	October 9 - 15	45.0		9.35	
	July 10 - 16	43.0		9.71	
	April 10 - 16	59.0		9.27	
	January 9 - 15	56.0		9.52	
2004	October 10 - 16	55.0		9.20	
	July 11 - 17	42.0		9.64	

^{1/} Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

**TABLE 2 -- Number of workers hired by farmers, wage rates, and hours worked,
Selected States, July 9 – 15, 2006, with comparisons ^{1/}**

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States ^{2/}
<i>Thousands</i>						
ALL HIRED WORKERS						
July 9 – 15, 2006	43	190	53	25	7	875
April 9 – 15, 2006	52	137	55	17	7	*720
July 10 – 16, 2005	41	206	63	24	7	936
EXPECTED TO WORK						
150 days or more						
July 9 – 15, 2006	38	160	38	23	6	630
April 9 – 15, 2006	44	*116	42	16	6	*581
July 10 – 16, 2005	39	162	47	21	6	662
149 days or less						
July 9 – 15, 2006	5	30	15	2	1	245
April 9 – 15, 2006	8	*21	13	1	1	*139
July 10 – 16, 2005	2	44	16	3	1	274
<i>Dollars per hour ^{3/}</i>						
ALL HIRED WORKER WAGE RATE						
July 9 – 15, 2006	9.40	9.96	9.38	8.70	12.31	9.74
April 9 – 15, 2006	9.19	*10.18	9.37	9.17	11.96	*9.78
July 10 – 16, 2005	9.70	9.68	9.27	8.53	11.76	9.38
WAGES BY TYPE OF WORKER						
Field & Livestock						
July 9 – 15, 2006	8.48	9.20	8.75	8.12	10.38	9.10
April 9 – 15, 2006	8.39	*9.21	8.64	8.60	9.93	*9.06
July 10 – 16, 2005	8.81	9.00	8.50	7.98	10.05	8.78
Field						
July 9 – 15, 2006	8.39	8.98	8.53	7.55	10.26	8.95
April 9 – 15, 2006	8.37	*8.93	8.24	8.14	9.79	*8.95
July 10 – 16, 2005	8.75	8.76	8.07	7.90	10.00	8.61
Livestock						
July 9 – 15, 2006	9.10	10.90	9.12	9.10	^{4/}	9.56
April 9 – 15, 2006	8.50	*10.80	9.06	9.13	^{4/}	*9.31
July 10 – 16, 2005	9.15	10.66	9.06	8.11	^{4/}	9.26
<i>Average hours per week</i>						
HOURS WORKED BY ALL HIRED WORKERS						
July 9 – 15, 2006	41.0	45.7	37.6	47.2	39.1	40.9
April 9 – 15, 2006	40.4	*43.0	39.2	48.7	36.6	40.8
July 10 – 16, 2005	41.3	45.3	36.5	45.6	40.0	40.6

^{1/} Excludes Agricultural Service workers.

^{2/} United States exclude Alaska.

^{3/} Value of any perquisites provided are not included in wage rates.

^{4/} Insufficient data for livestock.

*Revised.

Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Pacific, Appalachian II, Corn Belt II, Delta, and Appalachian I regions. In the Pacific and Corn Belt II regions, the higher wages were due to a significantly lower percentage of part time workers in the work force. The higher wages in the Appalachian II region were due to a larger proportion of highly paid equine workers in the work force. In the Delta region, the higher wages were due to increased demand for highly skilled workers on aquaculture and dairy farms. The higher wages in the Appalachian I region were due to a greater percentage of nursery and greenhouse workers in the work force.

RELIABILITY OF FARM LABOR ESTIMATES

SURVEY PROCEDURES: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) during the last two weeks of July using sampling procedures to ensure every employer of agricultural workers had a chance of being selected.

Two samples of farm operators are selected. First, NASS maintains a list of farms that hire farm workers. Farms on this list are classified by size and type. Those expected to employ large numbers of workers are selected with greater frequency than those hiring few or no workers. A second sample consists of segments of land scientifically selected from an area sampling frame. Each June, highly trained interviewers locate each selected land segment and identify every farm operating land within the sample segment's boundaries. The names of farms found in these area segments are matched against the NASS list of farms; those not found on the list are included in the labor survey sample to represent all farms. This methodology is known as multiple frame sampling, with an area sample used to measure the incompleteness of the list. Additionally, a list of agricultural service firms was sampled in California and Florida. The survey reference week was July 9-15, 2006.

RELIABILITY: Two types of errors, sampling and non-sampling, are always present in an estimate based on a sample survey. Both type affect the "accuracy" of the estimates.

Sampling error occurs because a complete census is not taken. The sampling error measures the variation in estimates from the average of all possible samples. An estimate of 100 with a sampling error of 1 would mean that chances are 19 out of 20 that the estimates from all possible samples averaged together would be between 98 and 102; which is the survey estimate, plus or minus two times the sampling error. The sampling error expressed as a percent of the estimate is called the relative sampling error. The relative sampling error for number of hired workers at the U.S. level is normally less than 5 percent. The relative sampling error for the number of hired workers generally ranged between 10 and 15 percent at the regional level. The U.S. all hired farm worker wage rate had a relative sampling error of 0.8 percent. The relative sampling error was 0.7 percent for the combined field and livestock worker wage rate. Relative sampling errors for the all hired farm worker wage rate generally ranged between 1 and 5 percent at the regional levels. Relative sampling errors for wage rates published by type of farm and economic class of farm generally ranged between 2 and 14 percent at the regional level.

Non-sampling errors can occur in a complete census as well as in sample surveys. They are caused by the inability to obtain correct information from each operation sampled, differences in interpreting questions or definitions, and mistakes in editing, coding or processing the data. Special efforts are taken at each step of the survey to minimize non-sampling errors.

REVISION POLICY: Farm labor information is subject to revision the next time the information is published or the year after the original publication date. The basis for revision must be supported by additional data that directly affect the level of the estimate. Worker numbers and wage rates for July 2005 and April 2006 were subject to revision with this report. If any revisions were made to previous data, they are reprinted in this report for your information, and they are identified as such.